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SUBJECT: USAID GIFT PROJECTS IN CROATIA

REFTEL: STATE 142147

¶1. USAID in Croatia has two existing and one planned program, which contribute to the goals of Internet freedom in promoting access to and use of the Internet.

¶2. Project Name: Local Government Reform Program

Recipient: Local and regional governments throughout Croatia

Project Description: Using E-Government software, the project goal is to improve transparency between government officials and local citizens. The software, developed through USAID technical assistance, enables government officials to post city budget, meeting minutes and allows citizens to post questions of their local officials. Governments will soon use the program to advertise referenda and post forms on-line. The system increases accountability and transparency by giving citizens access to information and promotes interaction between citizens and their local leaders.

IT component: USAID also funded software development

FY 05 Funding: approximately \$400,000

FY 06 Funding: approximately \$400,000

Funding is estimated because the e-government component is only one part of the Local Government Reform Program.

¶3. Project Name: Legacy Mechanisms Project

Recipients: NGOs involved in legal services, politics, commerce and consulting

Project Description: The purpose of the Legacy Program is to provide institutional capacity development assistance to key organizations to enhance their ability to be legacies of USAID assistance. These are organizations, institutions or people who will protect and build upon USAID investments and become advocates for Croatia's development as a market-oriented and democratic society. The project calls for improving access to the Internet, provision of computers and software, and training for IT professionals.

IT Component: USAID donated 10 personal computers to Legal Services Coalition, Osijek, a coalition of 10 NGOs involved in legal services. GONG, a political NGO, which serves as an alternative voice in the political arena, received software. USAID established a new portal and funded IT training through the Association of Management Consultants, an NGO, which acts as a coalition of consultants. USAID, along with the Ministry of Tourism, helped build a reservation and payment system on line for OMH, a coalition of small and family-run hotels.

FY05 Funding: n/a

FY06 Funding: approximately \$60,000

¶4. USAID is negotiating with the city of Vukovar, HT (Croatia's Internet Company), Microsoft, IBM and HABOR

(Croatia's bank for reconstruction and development) to expand Internet access to the public and to make Vukovar, one of worst war-affected areas, a wireless city. The goal of the program is for everyone in Vukovar to have free access to the Internet.
FY07 Funding: between \$3 million and \$4 million.

BRADTKE